



Tolworth Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 102575
LEA Kingston Upon Thames LEA
Inspection number 276738
Inspection dates 24 November 2005 to 25 November 2005
Reporting inspector Philip Mann AI

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Infant	School address	School Lane
School category	Community		Tolworth
Age range of pupils	3 to 7		Surbiton KT6 7SA
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	020 8399 4231
Number on roll	296	Fax number	020 8390 9372
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Ms G Kortright
Date of previous inspection	8 November 1999	Headteacher	Ms E Joyce

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Tolworth Infant School is bigger than average of its type. It is situated in the residential area of Tolworth, Surbiton and adjacent to a neighbouring junior school. Children start school with attainment below the local average in the nursery and particularly so in early language skills where it is very low. The number of pupils with learning difficulties is about average with three pupils with statements of special educational needs. An average number of pupils are entitled to free school meals. The number of pupils whose home language is not English is well above average and many are at an early stage of learning English. A significant number of these pupils join the school other than in the nursery and reception classes.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Inspectors agree with the school's own self-evaluation that it is a good school but note that it is outstanding in many aspects of its work. Leadership and management of the highest quality have ensured that the school has continued to improve over time. School governance is very effective. Staff work as a very effective team to ensure that all pupils are given the chance to succeed. Improvement since the previous inspection has been substantial and capacity for further development is very good. The school provides very good value for money. Outstanding provision in the Foundation Stage ensures that these children make very good progress from a low starting point. Older pupils continue to make very good progress because of the overall good teaching and the wealth of interesting learning experiences planned for them. Although teaching and learning are good overall, there are some variations across the school. The expectations of pupils' behaviour, and the pace of lessons, are very good in most classes. However, in a small minority of lessons the teaching, though satisfactory, does not always fully challenge and extend the pupils to the same extent.

What the school should do to improve further

* Share very good practice to further improve the quality and consistency of teaching.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Achievement is outstanding in many aspects of learners' development. This is particularly so in reading and writing where many pupils reach expected levels by the time they are seven. Nearly a half of pupils speak English as an additional language and they make particularly good progress in their literacy skills. This rapid progress in literacy skills supports the very good overall achievement of pupils in all other areas of learning. The attainment of children starting in the reception classes is below expected levels in communication skills. The attainment of these children in other areas of learning is generally what would be expected. Outstanding provision contributes significantly to the very good achievement of these children. This high level of achievement is maintained across the rest of the school. For instance, the 2004 national tests and teacher assessments confirm that standards are generally above average overall in reading, writing, mathematics and science. The dip in the 2005 results, although average in all areas, is because of the higher than normal number of pupils with learning difficulties present in this year group. However, comprehensive school data and inspection evidence confirms that all groups of learners achieve equally well overtime. Pupils with learning difficulties make significant strides in their learning. Those pupils whose home language is not English also make very good progress and this is particularly so in their reading and writing. This very good achievement happens because the school places a strong emphasis on the development of the pupils' speaking and listening skills. As a result, many pupils in Year 2 are able to talk about and write with confidence about their learning experiences. The most able pupils are able to

write at length in a neat joined up style with imagination and flair beyond expectations for their age.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. They benefit from a wealth of opportunities to develop their personal and social skills, such as the peer mediation system, school council and use of buddies. This gives them self-confidence and skills which prepare them effectively for the next stage in their education. The vast majority of pupils respond very well to this provision as demonstrated in their enthusiasm for school work. Pupils demonstrate sensitivity and respect in their relationships with each other and with adults. They are also taught to value their different cultural backgrounds. This enables all pupils to feel safe and to flourish. They have a good understanding of healthy lifestyle choices. Pupils are helped to achieve very well by being given clear personal targets for improving their work. Throughout the day, from lessons and through assemblies and choir practice, the atmosphere in the school is vibrant. It is clear that the pupils are enjoying themselves. As a result, most of them attend regularly and are enthusiastic learners. The school works hard to improve the unsatisfactory attendance of a minority.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good overall with some outstanding practice evident within the school. This is particularly so for the teaching of literacy skills to the oldest pupils. Most pupils respond very well to this good teaching. They work with great enthusiasm to very well planned and challenging learning experiences but in a very small number of the lessons there is not enough challenge for the most able pupils. On most occasions the demanding behaviour of some pupils is managed effectively. The teaching of literacy skills is particularly effective and learners make rapid progress over time as is seen in the quality of writing in the pupils' books. Relationships between all staff and pupils are exceptional. This contributes greatly to the very positive working atmosphere around the school. Support staff make a valuable contribution to the teaching of all pupils in need of extra help and very effective liaison with teachers ensures that the achievements of all pupils are monitored well.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The school's curriculum is exceptional and enables all groups of pupils to achieve remarkably well. It is enriched by some exciting and unusual activities such as trampolining, athletics, short tennis, cricket, gymnastics, football and basketball in addition to the usual provision for physical education. Also, the school offers all children

a 5-10 minute 'wake up exercise session' at the start of the day. As a result, all children are energised, alert and more ready for their school day. The provision for information and communication technology is now good and used effectively in many lessons. Learning has been enhanced through visits out to major shopping stores and a pizza restaurant. These first-hand activities play a vital part in the pupils' literacy development. Pupils are very enthusiastic about such visits and they talk and write at length about them on return to school. The curriculum successfully promotes the pupils' knowledge of health and safety and lays an excellent foundation for later economic well-being. Links between areas of the curriculum are outstanding with a very strong focus on learning through experience. The school has many awards that acknowledge its excellent curriculum, such as Arts Mark Silver, Primary Quality Mark and the Healthy Schools Award.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school provides an outstanding level of care, support and guidance for its pupils, successfully putting the needs of each individual child at the heart of what it does. Procedures for assessing children's progress are very effective and challenging targets are set for pupils of all abilities. The support given to pupils with special needs and those learning English is well targeted and very thorough. The school has established strong links with outside agencies and draws on their experience when necessary. Child protection arrangements are robust and any learners at risk are identified early. The school also works well with parents to ensure that their children make good progress. The school actively promotes healthy living. For instance, pupils are very positive about recent improvements made to the school dinner menus and said, 'We have healthy food now!' Staff set pupils a good example in building trusting relationships and in caring for the well-being of others.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The leadership and management of this school are outstanding and this is why pupils achieve so very well. Provision is of very high quality. The charismatic head teacher is energetic and enthusiastic and these qualities of her leadership are infectious. The head teacher's vision for the school is shared very effectively with other senior managers and governors. It is expected that both pupils and teachers focus on achieving high standards in all aspects of their work, and this is very successfully realised. There is a brilliant feeling of teamwork which enthuses and supports all staff. The leadership roles of other managers are continually being developed and reviewed. Systems for monitoring and evaluating the school's performance are first class. Data analysis and the subsequent use of this analysis are exceptional. All senior managers are involved and the findings are acted upon to bring about further improvement. Any minor weakness in performance is tackled rapidly. School self evaluation is highly effective and leads to changes for the better but it rates itself good in most aspects. The inspection team disagree with this and judge the school to be outstanding in many

features of its work. The governors are very effective and understand clearly what the strengths of the school are. They are very supportive of the head teacher but are not afraid to ask challenging questions and seek justification. Since the last inspection, the school has made great strides in the key areas. As a result, information technology is swiftly becoming a strength within the curriculum. With such inspirational leadership, this school's capacity to keep up its splendid work is clearly evident.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

The inspectors and I really enjoyed visiting your school and we would like to thank you all for making us feel so welcome.

It is very clear to us that you really enjoy being at school and in particular love taking part in the many things that the staff do for you. What is so good to see is the way that you get stuck into your work and how neat your writing is. All of the inspectors feel that this is because your headteacher really encourages everybody to do their best and manages the school in a really good way. The teachers make the lessons interesting and set targets for you to work at. As a result, everybody makes good progress throughout the year. There is such a happy atmosphere around the school and it is a pleasure to see you all playing and working together as one big team.

Most lessons go as well as the teachers want them to and they will work hard to make sure all lessons are successful. You can help them in this by always listening to what they have to say and trying your best to behave well.

Yours sincerely,

Philip Mann

Lead Inspector